

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A gaming device comprising:

a plurality of reels;

a plurality of symbols including at least one wild symbol on the reels; and

at least one winning symbol combination, wherein if after the reels are activated to determine a plurality of said symbols, said determined symbols:

(i) include a wild symbol but no winning symbol combination on the reels including that wild symbol, or

(ii) do not form a winning symbol combination including the wild symbol that provides an award having an award amount equal to or greater than a designated award amount,

then at least one of the reels other than the reel having the wild symbol is re-activated for a designated number of activations and an award is provided to a player if one of the winning symbol combinations occurs on the reels during any of said re-activations.

Claim 2 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the designated award amount is predetermined.

Claim 3 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the designated award amount is determined based on a wager made by the player.

Claim 4 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the designated award amount includes at least one award associated with the winning symbol combinations.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a payline associated with the reels, wherein if after the reels are activated to determine a plurality of said symbols, said determined symbols:

(i) include a wild symbol but no winning symbol combination on the payline including that wild symbol, or

(ii) do not form a winning symbol combination including the wild symbol on the payline that provides an award having an award amount equal to or greater than a the designated award amount,

then at least one of the reels other than the reel having the wild symbol is re-activated for a the designated number of activations and an award is provided to a player if one of the winning symbol combinations occurs on the payline during any of said re-activations.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a plurality of paylines associated with the reels, wherein if after the reels are activated to determine a plurality of said symbols, said determined symbols:

(i) include a wild symbol but no winning symbol combination on one of the paylines including that wild symbol, or

(ii) do not form a winning symbol combination including the wild symbol on one of the paylines that provides an award having an award amount equal to or greater than ~~a~~the designated award amount,

then at least one of the reels other than the reel having the wild symbol is re-activated for ~~a~~the designated number of activations and an award is provided to a player if one of the winning symbol combinations occurs on one of the paylines during any of said re-activations.

Claim 7 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the symbols include a plurality of wild symbols.

Claim 8 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the designated number of activations is predetermined.

Claim 9 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the designated number of activations is determined based on a wager made by the player.

Claim 10 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the symbols include at least one of the following: numbers, letters, characters, multipliers, game elements and images.

Claim 11 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the symbols include at least one bonus symbol.

Claim 12 (original): The gaming device of Claim 11, wherein an outcome associated with the bonus symbol includes at least one of the following: at least one free spin, at least one free game and at least one multiplier.

Claim 13 (original): The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the wild symbol includes at least one indicator which indicates at least one symbol on the reels, wherein any winning symbol combinations on the reels include at least the wild symbol and the symbol indicated by the indicator.

Claims 14 to 16 (canceled).

Claim 17 (original): A gaming device comprising:

a plurality of reels;

a plurality of symbols including at least one wild symbol on the reels;

at least one winning symbol combination; and

a processor operable to activate the reels and wherein if after said reels are activated, at least one of the reels includes:

(i) the wild symbol, but no winning symbol combinations on the reels including the wild symbol, or

(ii) the wild symbol, but no winning symbol combinations including the wild symbol provide an award having an award amount equal to or greater than a designated award amount,

then the reel including the wild symbol is held stationary while the reels other than the stationary reel are re-activated for a designated number of activations, wherein an award is provided to a player when any winning symbol combinations occur on the reels.

Claim 18 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the designated award amount is predetermined.

Claim 19 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the designated award amount is determined based on a wager made by the player.

Claim 20 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the designated award amount is randomly determined.

Claim 21 (currently amended): The gaming device of Claim 17, which includes a payline associated with the reels, wherein if after said reels are activated, at least one of the reels includes

(i) the wild symbol, but no winning symbol combinations including the wild symbol occur on the payline, or

(ii) the wild symbol, but no winning symbol combinations including the wild symbol occur on the payline that provide an award having an award amount equal to or greater than ~~a~~the designated award amount,

then the reel including the wild symbol is held stationary while the reels other than the stationary reel are re-activated for ~~a~~the designated number of activations, wherein an award is provided to a player when any winning symbol combinations occur on the payline.

Claim 22 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, which includes a plurality of paylines associated with the reels, wherein if after said reels are activated, at least one of the reels includes

(i) the wild symbol, but no winning symbol combinations including the wild symbol occur on one of the paylines, or

(ii) the wild symbol, but no winning symbol combinations including the wild symbol occur on one of the paylines that provide an award having an award amount equal to or greater than a designated award amount,

then the reel including the wild symbol is held stationary while the reels other than the stationary reel are re-activated for a designated number of activations, wherein an award is provided to a player when any winning symbol combinations occur on one of the paylines.

Claim 23 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the symbols include a plurality of wild symbols.

Claim 24 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the designated number of activations is predetermined.

Claim 25 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the designated number of activations is determined based on a wager made by the player.

Claim 26 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the designated number of activations is randomly determined.

Claim 27 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein a probability associated with the wild symbol is less than a probability associated with at least one of the other symbols on the reels.

Claim 28 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the probability associated with the wild symbol is less than probabilities associated with a plurality of the other symbols on the reels.

Claim 29 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein a probability associated with the wild symbol is less than probabilities associated with all of the other symbols on the reels.

Claim 30 (original): The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the wild symbol includes at least one indicator which indicates at least one symbol on the reels, wherein any winning symbol combinations on the reels include at least the wild symbol and the symbol indicated by the indicator.

Claim 31 (original): A gaming device comprising:

- a wagering game;
- a plurality of reels; and
- a plurality of symbols on said reels, said symbols including at least one wild symbol, wherein if the wild symbol occurs on one of the reels in the game and:
 - (i) a win involving the wild symbol does not occur on the reels, or
 - (ii) a win at a designated level involving the wild symbol does not occur on the reels,

then the reel including the wild symbol is held stationary, at least one additional symbol from the plurality of symbols is generated in association with the wild symbol and an award is provided to a player for any wins based on the combination of the wild symbol and the additional symbol or symbols generated on the reels.

Claim 32 (original): The gaming device of Claim 31, wherein the additional symbol includes a wild symbol.

Claims 33 to 40 (canceled).

Claim 41 (original): A gaming device comprising:

- a plurality of reels;
- a plurality of symbols including a plurality of wild symbols on the reels; and
- at least one winning symbol combination, wherein if after the reels are activated to randomly determine a plurality of said symbols, said symbols include a wild symbol but no winning combination of symbols on the reels including that wild symbol, then at least one of the reels other than the reel having the wild symbol is re-activated for a designated number of activations and an award is provided to a player if one of the winning symbol combinations occurs on the reels during any of said re-activations.

Claim 42 (original): The gaming device of Claim 41, wherein one of the reels including one of the plurality of wild symbols is held stationary when the award amount associated with an award for any winning symbol combinations occurring on the reels including said wild symbol is less than a designated award amount greater than zero.

Claim 43 (original): The gaming device of Claim 42, wherein the designated award amount is predetermined.

Claim 44 (original): The gaming device of Claim 42, wherein the designated award amount is determined based on a wager made by the player.

Claim 45 (original): The gaming device of Claim 42, wherein the designated award amount includes at least one award associated with the winning symbol combinations.

Claim 46 (original): The gaming device of Claim 41, which includes a payline associated with the reels wherein one of the reels including at least one of the plurality of wild symbols is held stationary when no winning symbol combinations occur on the payline including the wild symbol, at least one of the reels other than the stationary reel is re-activated for a designated number of activations and an award is provided to the player when any of the winning symbol combinations occur on the payline associated with the reels.

Claim 47 (original): The gaming device of Claim 41, which includes a plurality of paylines associated with the reels wherein one of the reels including a wild symbol is held stationary when no winning symbol combinations occur on the payline including the wild symbol, at least one of the reels other than the stationary reel is re-activated for a designated number of activations and an award is provided to the player when any winning symbol combination occurs on the payline.

Claim 48 (original): The gaming device of Claim 41, wherein the designated number of activations is predetermined.

Claim 49 (original): The gaming device of Claim 41, wherein the designated number of activations is determined based on a wager made by the player.

Claim 50 (original): The gaming device of Claim 41, wherein the symbols include at least one of the following: numbers, letters, characters, multipliers, game elements and images.

Claim 51 (original): The gaming device of Claim 41, wherein the symbols include at least one bonus symbol.

Claim 52 (original): The gaming device of Claim 51, wherein an outcome associated with the bonus symbol includes at least one of the following: at least one free spin, at least one free game and at least one multiplier.

Claim 53 (original): A method of operating a gaming device, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) displaying a plurality of reels including a plurality of symbols, said symbols including at least one wild symbol;

(b) holding one of the reels stationary if:

(i) the wild symbol occurs on said reel and no winning symbol combinations including the wild symbol occur on the reels, or

(ii) the wild symbol occurs on said reel and no winning symbol combinations including the wild symbol occur on the reels that provide an award having an award amount greater than a designated award amount;

(c) activating the reels other than the reel including the wild symbol for a designated number of activations of the reels when the reel including the wild symbol is held stationary; and

(d) providing an award to a player for any winning symbol combinations that occur on the reels until there are no activations remaining.

Claim 54 (original): The method of Claim 53, which includes the step of predetermining the designated award amount.

Claim 55 (original): The method of Claim 53, which includes the step of randomly determining the designated award amount.

Claim 56 (original): The method of Claim 53, which includes the step of determining the designated award amount based on a wager made by the player.

Claim 57 (original): The method of Claim 53, wherein the step of holding one of the reels stationary includes holding one of the reels stationary when the wild symbol occurs on at least one payline associated with the reels and no winning symbol combinations occur on said payline.

Claim 58 (original): The method of Claim 53, which includes the step of predetermining the designated number of activations.

Claim 59 (original): The method of Claim 53, which includes the step of randomly determining the designated number of activations.

Claim 60 (original): The method of Claim 53, which includes the step of determining the designated number of activations based on a wager made by the player.

Claim 61 (original): The method of Claim 53, wherein the symbols include at least one bonus symbol.

Claim 62 (original): The method of Claim 61, which includes at least one of the steps of providing at least one free spin, at least one free game and at least one multiplier when the bonus symbol occurs on the reels.

Claim 63 (original): The method of Claim 53, which includes the step of indicating at least one symbol on the reels using at least one indicator associated with the wild symbol, wherein any winning symbol combinations on the reels include at least the wild symbol and the symbol indicated by the indicator.

Claim 64 (original): The method of Claim 53, wherein the steps (a) to (d) are provided to the player through a data network.

Claim 65 (original): The method of Claim 64, wherein the data network is an internet.

Claims 66 to 74 (canceled).